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It is well known that over the plains in Colorado crops are now being raised without irrigation in places where this was formerly supposed impossible. This is in large part due to the adoption of improved methods of cultivation specially adapted to the climatic conditions. The farmer early observed the dry weather of June, and came to expect it as a rule. On these plains successful agriculture was possible only after a careful study of the June drought. At the present time the aim is to have the times of planting so fixed that at the time of this drought each crop shall be at that stage of its growth in which experience shows it can best endure the dry weather.

G. H. STONE.

Colorado Springs, March 5.

The Fiske Range-Finder.

WITH reference to the very interesting suggestion of Mr. J. F. Dennison concerning my range-finder, which appeared in your issue of Feb. 28, I can only say that the plan which he suggests has been the subject of much thought on my part, and has been sketched out in many modified forms. The only objection to it is the very commonplace, but very potent one, that the end attained is hardly worth the apparatus required. Some person must be at hand to read the distances indicated, and he can very easily move the contacts himself. As a general principle, I think it is agreed that mechanism should never be introduced where it can be avoided, for mechanism is liable to disarrangement; and simplicity should, it seems to me, be the aim of all invention.

BRADLEY A. FISKE, U.S.N.

New York, March 5.

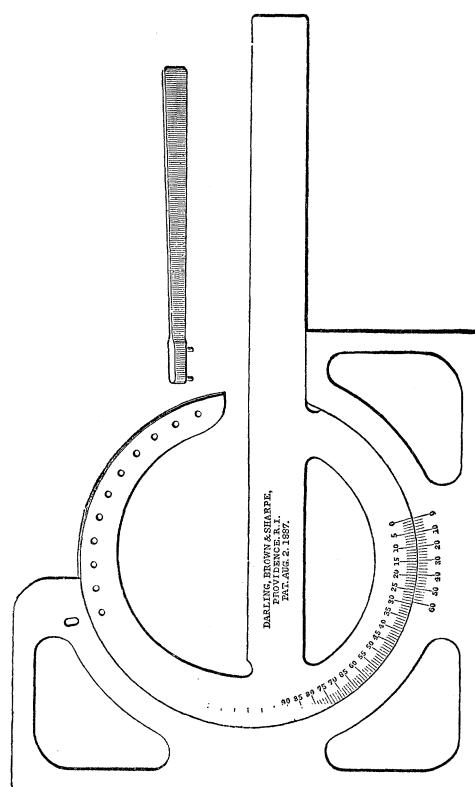
INDUSTRIAL NOTES.

A New Draughtsman's Protractor.

THE protractor shown in the accompanying cut is made from one-sixteenth inch sheet steel, and is light and durable. The length of the blade is eight inches and a half. The graduations read to degrees, and the vernier reads to two minutes. This protractor is chiefly used in connection with a T-square or straight-edge. It can be quickly and accurately set by hand to any angle. A lever is, however, provided as of possible advantage in obtaining very fine settings.

There are no projections on either face of the instrument, and consequently it can be used on either edge of the blade or

either side up. This makes it particularly convenient in dividing circles, transferring angles, drawing oblique lines at right angles to each other, or laying off given angles on each side of a vertical or horizontal line without changing the setting. For laying out tapers and dividing circles and laying out geometrical figures, tables are furnished with the instru-



ment, which give the settings that are necessary. In many instances the protractor takes the place of the ordinary 45-degree and 60-degree triangles, and it is also used as an extension to the T-square when the work is beyond the end of the blade of the square. It is made by Darling, Brown, and Sharpe, manufacturers of fine tools, of Providence, R.I.

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